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Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 PM-05 NSC-05
SS-15 /063 W
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R 211418Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4951
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY SANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 4461

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, PBOR, ET, SO
SUBJ: ETHIOPIAN ACCOUNTS OF FIGHTING ON EASTERN FRONT

REF: A. ADDIS ABABA 4418 (NOTAL), B. ADDIS ABABA 4383 (NOTAL)
C. ADDIS ABABA 4345 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: JULY 21 ETHIOPIAN MEDIA GAVE EXTENSIVE COVERAGE TO FIGHTING ON NEWLY-DESIGNATED EASTERN FRONT BY ETHIOPIAN NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY OPERATION (ENRO) COMMAND. REPORTS CLAIM HUNDREDS OF INFILTRATING SOMALI SOLDIERS CAPTURED AND THOUSANDS "WIPED OUT". NEWSPAPER PHOTOS DISPLAY CACHES OF CAPTURED WEAPONS AND DESTROYED TRANSPORT TRUCKS WITH SOMALI LICENSE PLATES. ACCOUNTS FURTHER CLAIM REGULAR FORCES PRESENTLY SCORING REMARKABLE VICTORIES IN HARRARGHE REGION TOWNS OF GODE, KEBRE DEHAR, DEGEHABUR, WARDER AND ENVIRONS OF HARAR AND DIRE DAWA. NEWSPAPER ARTICLE LISTS 23 SOMALI SOLDIERS BY NAMES AND CODE NUMBERS
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ALLEGEDLY CAPTURED AND WHO LED INTO ETHIOPIA BY A COL. FEISAL ALI HASSAN. THERE ALSO ALLEGATIONS OF INVOLVEMENT BY THREE ARAB NATIONALS, AND INDIRECT IRAQI AND U.S. ASSISTANCE TO SOMALI-SUPPORTED INSURGENTS. END SUMMARY.

1. IN BROADEST MEDIA COVERAGE OF "EASTERN FRONT"

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SINCE MILITIA BEGAN MOVEMENT TO FIELD PAST WEEK, JULY
21 ETHIOPIAN HERALD CLAIMED THOUSANDS OF SOMALI
SOLDIERS LIQUIDATED AND HUNDREDS CAPTURED BY COMBINED
REGULAR AND PEOPLE'S MILITIA FORCES. TEAM OF JOUR-
NALISTS VISITED OGADEN TOWNS OF GODE, KEBRE DEHAR,
DEGEHABUR, WARDER, HARAR AND DIRE DAWA WHERE ETHIO-
PIAN TROOPS REPORTEDLY SCORED "ASTOUNDING" VICTORIES.
(IT NOT STATED IF VICTORIES WERE MERELY HOLDING TOWNS
SUCCESSFULLY, BUT REPORTS FROM GODE, HARAR, AND DIRE
DAWA WOULD INDICATE "VICTORIES" SO FAR HAVE BEEN RE-
TENTION ETHIOPIAN CONTROL OF STRATEGIC TERRITORY.
ENRO COMMAND DISPATCH STATED REPORT FROM EASTERN FRONT
"NOT VICTORY OF BROAD MASSES AND FIGHTING FORCE
AGAINST SOMALI TROOPS, BUT SUCCESS IN HALTING DAS-
TARDLY AGGRESSION COMMITTED BY SOMALIA. HISTORY OF
VICTORY WILL BE FOLLOWED LATER.") REPORTS ESPECIALLY
PRAISE ETHIOPIAN AIR FORCE FOR ITS IMPRESSIVE ROLE IN
DEFENDING REVOLUTION AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. (THIS
CONFIRMS REPORTS AIR FORCE CRUCIAL FACTOR IN DEFENSE
OF GODE AIRFIELD AND IMPORTANT IN ATTACK ON DIRE
DAWA AIRPORT.) REPORTS ALSO PRAISED DIRE DAWA RESI-
DENTS FOR OFFERING PROVISIONS TO MILITIA AND REGULAR
TROOPS THROUGH KEBELES AND QUOTED APRIL 12 MENGISTU
SPEECH THAT STRUGGLE COULD BE LONG AND DRAWN OUT.

2. IN EFFORT TO PROVE CONCLUSIVELY REGULAR SOMALI
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TROOP INVOLVEMENT IN OGADEN INSURGENT CAMPAIGN, HERALD
PRINTED NAMES AND CODE NUMBERS OF 23 CAPTURED SOMALI
SOLDIERS, REPORTED SEIZURE OF DOCUMENTS ISSUED TO
MEMBERS SOMALI INVADING ARMY BY DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
OF SOMALIA DEFENSE MINISTRY FOR PROVISIONS, ARMS AND
AMMUNITIONS, AND GAVE NAMES OF SOMALI OFFICERS
ALLEGEDLY PARTICIPATING IN DIRECT AGGRESSION. OFFI-
CERS LISTED ARE: COL. FEISAL ALI HASSAN (COMMANDER,
UNIT 1366), COL. GULED MOHAMMED AHMED NOUR
(CMDR. 5TH BDE, 109TH TN., 26TH ARMY), COL.
GROGES RADARE (DEP. CMDR. ARMOURED BDE.), MAJ.
MOHAMMED NOUR HIRSI (INF. BDE. CHIEF OF STAFF) AND LT.
TAHIR MIRA JAMAL (ARMY ORDINANCE).

3. ARTICLE ALSO REPORTED TWO ARAB NATIONALS KILLED
AND ONE CAPTURED, WHO MEDICAL DOCTOR, WITHOUT IDENTI-
FYING WHICH ARAB COUNTRY. IN EFFORT TO ILLUSTRATE
IRAQI AND REACTIONARY ARAB COMPLICITY, REPORT CLAIMED
DRIED DATES PACKED IN IRAQ WERE CAPTURED. TO PROVE
U.S. INVOLVEMENT, REPORT FURTHER ALLEGED M-16'S AMONG
GUNS CAPTURED AT KEBRE DEHAR, CLEARLY DEMONSTRATING
"AMERICAN IMPERIALISM ON BASIS OF ITS SECRET DEAL WITH

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REACTIONARY MOGADISCIO REGIME HAS BEGUN TO INDIRECTLY
ARM SOMALIA TO VIOLATE ETHIOPIAN TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY
AND REVERSE COURSE OF POPULAR REVOLUTION." (THIS NOT
FIRST PRESS SPECULATION ABOUT SECRET US-SOMALI ARMS
DEAL. PHOTOS IN PRESS INDEED SHOW SMALL NUMBER OF
WHAT APPEAR TO BE M-14'S AMONG CAPTURED WEAPONS.)

4. COMMENT: WHILE INITIAL ETHIOPIAN SUCCESSES APPEAR
LIMITED, THEY NONETHELESS DEMONSTRATE ABILITY TO
RETAIN IMPORTANT STRATEGIC DEFENSIVE POSITIONS.
ETHIOPIAN CONTROL OF AIR SPACE APPARENTLY UNCHALLENGED
AT PRESENT, ENABLING ATTACKS ON LARGE TRUCK CONVOYS
TRANSPORTING INSURGENTS SUPPLIES AND TROOPS. UNCONFIRMED
REPORTS INDICATE THAT AS MANY AS 50 TRUCKS DESTROYED.
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JOURNALISTS' ABILITY TO VISIT TOWNS LISTED WOULD INDI-
CATE INSURGENTS ALONE NOT YET ABLE TO CAPTURE EVEN
ISOLATED AND FORMERLY LIGHTLY DEFENDED STRATEGIC OUT-
POSTS SUCH AS WARDER AND GODE. ALTHOUGH ETHIOPIAN
MILITIA JUST BEGINNING TO ENTER FRAY, EMBASSY QUESTIONS
WHETHER MILITARY CAPABILITY OF MANY SOMALI-
SUPPORTED INSURGENTS, INDEPENDENT OF REGULAR SOMALI TROOPS,
IS LIKELY TO BE MUCH BETTER, AND WHETER INSURGENTS BY THEM-
SELVES SUFFICIENT TO "WIN" AND HOLD OGADEN.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Concepts: NEWS MEDIA COMMENTS, COMBAT OPERATIONS
Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 21-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
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TAGS: MOPS, PBOR, ET, SO
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